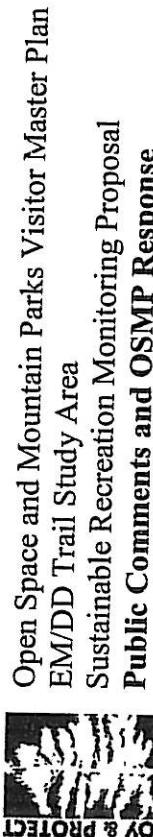


General

Public Comment/Issue	OSMP Response
OSMP Trail Guide volunteers might be a valuable resource to assist in the collection of monitoring data.	<i>Staff will investigate the need and feasibility of using OSMP volunteers, including Trail Guides, to conduct monitoring.</i>
Boulder Mountain Bike Patrol also collects data during regular volunteer patrols that may be useful for OSMP.	<i>OSMP often receives calls and email messages describing the observations of community members and volunteers. Staff may use this information to inform decision-making.</i>
How frequently will you monitor—is all this monitoring an on-going commitment indefinitely?	<i>The Eldorado Mountain / Doudy Draw Trail Study Plan (EM/DD TSA) stated that staff would monitor up to two years to assess the effectiveness of on-trail and dog regulations, and to track the sustainability of equestrian travel on Goshawk Ridge Trail. Decisions about the specific duration of monitoring will be based on the results of initial monitoring and the need to measure the effectiveness of OSMP's responses. Monitoring for undesignated trails and trail conditions will be incorporated into existing system-wide monitoring.</i>
	<i>Wildlife monitoring will occur over a longer time frame (up to 10 years). Staff will regularly evaluate the monitoring results for evidence of the presence of sensitive species and habitats that would benefit from immediate protection (e.g., seasonal closures or off-trail permit restrictions in areas around forest raptor nest sites).</i>

11/3/2008



Open Space and Mountain Parks Visitor Master Plan
EM/DD Trail Study Area

Sustainable Recreation Monitoring Proposal
Public Comments and OSMP Response

Public Comments	OSMP Response
Clarify that existing regulations will stay in place even if we find acceptable levels of compliance.	<i>The regulations described in the VMP and EM/DD TSA Plan will remain in place even if measured compliance levels are above established thresholds</i>
Instead of restricting an activity, increase enforcement of the rules already in place.	<i>Increasing enforcement was recommended as one of the least restrictive management responses.</i>
Thresholds may be wrong (too high, too low)	Staff sought guidance from the Visitor Master Plan (VMP) and the EM / DD TSA Plan for setting proposed thresholds and believe the thresholds are consistent with direction from the OSBT and City Council.
As monitoring results or data come in, consider integrating the data from various monitoring projects, including wildlife monitoring, and adjust thresholds as a response.	OSMP may consider revisions to the initial thresholds. Any changes to established thresholds would likely go through a public review and comment process.
The current level of ranger staffing will not be sufficient to make a significant presence on the trails.	<i>Two seasonal ranger positions have been added. They will focus on monitoring and patrolling these new trails.</i>
The effect of non-compliance varies with volume of visitor activity. A high rate of non-compliance by a small number of people may not be significant.	OSMP is anticipating that the Spring Brook Loop will be a popular trail and rates of use will be significant. The monitoring will allow OSMP to develop compliance rates with specific activity types and determine relative levels of use by activity types
Integrate wildlife and vegetation consideration into the decision making process for the “most restrictive” options.	<i>Even low rates of non-compliant use can lead to resource impacts. The recreation ecology literature indicates that some of the most significant changes in resource condition result from cumulative effect of the initial disturbances. OSMP’s experience is that visitation increases over time and even low rates of non-compliance by those engaged in a particular activity are likely to lead to significant cumulative effects.</i> <i>As information from wildlife and vegetation monitoring becomes available, OSMP will use it to select the most beneficial management response.</i> <i>See attached document: Trails Related Vegetation Monitoring</i>

Public Comments	OSMP Response
Why is Physical Sustainable monitoring not being prescribed for the Spring Brook Loop?	<i>Trail condition monitoring which assesses the physical condition of trails is conducted on a system-wide and continuing basis. The new trails will be incorporated into the on-going trail management framework that links monitoring results with the prioritization of trail maintenance.</i>
Spring Brook Loop Visitor Conflict Monitoring	
Public Comments	OSMP Response
Management responses should include modifications to trail design as they do for the other monitoring projects.	<i>Trail modification is included in the recommended least restrictive management responses. Staff will clarify that trail modifications includes minor adjustments to the trail design.</i>
Trails need to be designed to manage the user group with the highest potential speed.	<i>Staff designs and constructs multiple use trails based on established trail standards for the activity which has the most significant physical requirements (i.e. vehicle access, horse, wheel chair). Staff also considers additional trail design features that help the trail function well for all activities occurring on the trail.</i>
Consider directional use as a least restrictive option even before opening the trails.	<i>Staff is considering this option.</i>
Temporal separation should be a “most restrictive” response—avoids creating second class citizens (bicyclists).	<i>Staff believes that temporal separation is an appropriate “less restrictive” response and can be implemented fairly.</i>
Include every activity (e.g., hiking) among those that could be prohibited under the “most restrictive” management response.	<i>While all activities are subject to being prohibited, the city has made a significant investment in the development of the Spring Brook Loop trail system. OSMP considers it in the interest of all visitors to seek strategies that allow continued multiple use of the loop.</i>
Survey data should be stratified by activity type.	<i>The visitor conflict survey results will report the degree of conflict reported for each activity type. If a particular activity is causing visitor conflict above the threshold, then management actions will be directed to reduce the conflict associated with that particular activity. If visitors experience conflict above the threshold, but no particular group is contributing above the threshold, staff will work at lowering the conflict by working with all the activities involved in causing conflict.</i>
Displacement of users will go undetected	<i>The VMP and EM/DD Plan do not identify goals or thresholds for the relative composition of visitation by activity type at the trail, area or system level.</i>
Establish a management goal that monitors the proportion of different activities	<i>OSMP is aware of displacement as a potential problem and has included questions about</i>

Trails Related Vegetation Monitoring

10/23/08

The vegetation monitoring and inventories related to trails planning is intended to look at impacts on a system-wide basis. Impacts from trail building and use tend to be somewhat discrete on vegetation resources. Unlike wildlife that may be displaced, or move out of an area due to recreation, vegetation tends to be impacted more directly through trampling, weed populations or construction damage. Due to this level of impact, management tools for the trail once it is built are limited. Management techniques like temporary or seasonal closures might be used to avoid muddy conditions but would do little to limit or correct trail impacts on vegetation from visitor use.

Instead of developing very specific vegetation monitoring projects in one small portion of the system (like Eldo/DD) staff has focused on getting system-wide baseline vegetation data that can be used to track populations, inform where specific alignments should avoid, and give us a better understanding of how the vegetation resources are fairing on OSMP as a whole. While informative in many ways, a very precise and specific monitoring project may not help inform vegetation management on a bigger scale and it may be difficult to tie observed changes to direct management actions (with the exception of weed treatment, See RAM mapping below) once the trail is established. These types of projects also tend to be long-term and expensive.

Existing Monitoring and Inventory projects that will help inform trails planning:

High Plains trail impact monitoring- This is a more specific monitoring effort set up prior to the construction of the High Plains trail. The monitoring consists of 54 transects and 216 subplots at varying distances from the trail tread. The goal of the monitoring is to track changes in vegetation cover and composition due to the trail itself. The monitoring was stratified to cover a variety of vegetation and patch types. Due to the variety of vegetation covered by this study the impacts can be extrapolated out and applied to other similar areas of the system.

Hwy 93 to Flatirons Vista connector trail visitor impact monitoring- This is a specific monitoring study conducted by ERO Associates from 2004-2007. It was designed to look at trail effects along the new Greenbelt connector trail. The study consisted of 6 transects at differing distances from the trail with the goal of measuring cover and composition of vegetation. The transects were placed in common vegetation types and the data could be extrapolated to other areas of the system.

RAM weed mapping- The rapid assessment weed mapping project is based on a widely used protocol adopted from Utah State University. This is a system-wide effort to quickly and consistently map weed species across OSMP. In 2008 staff focused on areas of the mountain backdrop including parts of the Eldo/DD TSA, and also mapped all designated and high use undesignated trails in the West TSA. This mapping gives staff comprehensive baseline weed information as well as a way to track changes in weed density, patch size and species occurrence. The trails specific data will inform where